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## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES > 3-3

### **No. 3-3: Processing of Certain Personnel Actions and the Certifying and Distribution of Payroll Warrants** (Effective Date 10.30.86)

#### 1. AUTHORITY

Chapter 14 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Houston and Resolution No. 86-6 of the City of Houston.

#### 2. PURPOSE

To facilitate the timely filling of vacancies and the processing of certain personnel actions.

#### 3. OBJECTIVE

To establish a standardized procedure for requesting, selecting, and hiring/rehiring municipal employees for the City of Houston and for the processing of certain personnel actions.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

a. Eligibility List - names arranged in order of merit, of persons who have passed suitable tests and possess the necessary qualifications and who are entitled to be certified for appointment under the provisions of Article Va and Chapter 14 of the Code of Ordinances.

b. New Hire (appointment) - designation of a person by the appointing authority to become an employee.

c. Posting Request Form - the form used by the employing department to request referrals or a job posting.

d. Rehire (reappointment) - authorization for a former employee to resume City employment.

e. Referral - applicant forwarded to the employing department by the Personnel Department/Selection Services Division who possesses the minimum

qualifications necessary to be certified for an appointment.

f. Referral Form - form initiated by the Personnel Department/Selection Services Division when making Employment referrals.

g. Selection - when candidate recommended by the employing department accepts the approved salary offer.

h. Selection Request Form - form which the employing department sends to the Personnel Department naming the recommended candidate and the requested action.

i. 201 Form - PD-201 which accomplishes a personnel action which includes rehire, new hire, reclassification, salary change, promotion, demotion, transfer, etc.

j. 203 Form - CS-203 that represents a vacant position.

k. Verification of Qualifications - the completion of a candidate's background check which confirms his/her qualifications for an appointment.

## 5. SCOPE

This procedure is applicable to all City of Houston Departments and Divisions.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Mayor shall be responsible for authorizing requests for appointment of City employees and for insuring that such authorizations have been appropriately carried out by City departments.

b. Controller's Office shall have responsibility for auditing all claims against City funds; and shall not sign payroll warrants unless funds are available and the appointment is in conformance with the Charter and City Code.

c. Finance and Administration shall have responsibility for processing payroll transactions; developing payroll warrants and reports regarding such transactions; maintaining the automated payroll systems; and maintaining the integrity of the data therein.

d. Personnel Department shall have responsibility for preparing and certifying the appropriate list of eligibles and certifying that appointment of the employees has been accomplished in conformity with Charter and applicable Civil Service rules and regulations.

e. Employing Departments shall have responsibility for the accuracy of appointment requests and requests for payroll transactions to be processed.

## 7. PROCEDURES

### a. General

(1) All personnel actions covered in these procedures must be processed in the following manner:

(a) The personnel actions of public safety employees are to be given priority. The actions of all other City employees must be

processed on a "first-in, first-out" basis with precedence being given to new hire/rehire personnel actions with no discrimination between or among employing departments. The Mayor or designee can approve a position in the event of a bonafide emergency. If such a emergency position does exist, the above processing criteria will need to be altered so as to meet the needs of the emergency.

(b) If a position is to be addressed on an emergency basis the personnel actions must be processed accordingly, but in no event later than as prescribed below.

(c) Each employing department which processes the appropriate personnel forms are required to provide a receipt or in lieu of a receipt, a date stamped copy of the forms certifying receipt by that department.

(d) All personnel action forms must be transmitted by messenger rather than by standard interoffice mail.

#### b. New Hire/Rehire

##### (1) Certification of Eligibles

(a) In order to begin the selection/recruitment process, the employing department initiates a Posting Request Form (see Attachment A) and forwards to the Personnel Department. This form can be submitted at anytime and does not have to be submitted with the CS-203 which is the request form to fill a vacant position.

(b) The CS-203 form used to fill a vacant position can be submitted for a replacement of a budgeted position when an official resignation has been received by the Department Director or his/her designee and documented by the submission of a completed form PD-20I. This will begin the approval process for filling the vacated position. In the case of a newly established position which has been approved as a position on the Payroll Roster, the CS-203 can be submitted at anytime after official approval for the position has been granted.

(c) Once the CS-203 form has been approved by the Mayor (or designee), it is forwarded to the Personnel Department. A copy of the approved request is forwarded to the Controller's Office by the Mayor (or designee) at the same time that the approved request is sent to the Personnel Department.

(d) Upon receipt of the posting request form the Personnel Department makes referrals to the employing department using the Referral Form (see Attachment B). Referrals are made within three (3) working days if an list is in existence, if there is not a list of referrals, then referrals are made within thirty (30) working days. Should the Personnel Department find that it is unable to make referrals within the applicable three (3) or thirty (30) working days , respectively, then the employing department will be notified within one (1) day of such finding, and of when referrals will be made.

## (2) The Selection Process

(a) The Employing Department interviews the referred candidates, identifies a candidate suitable for appointment, and verifies the background of the candidate by completing the Verification for Employment and Education Form (see Attachment C).

(b) The Employing Department completes the Selection Request Form (see Attachment D) or the Referral Form (see Attachment B) and forwards the recommendation to the Personnel Department. The Employing Department has full authority to recommend to the Personnel Department a hiring salary in the first quartile. Any salary recommendation above the first quartile must have documentation in support of such recommendations. All salary recommendations will be reviewed by the Personnel Department for internal consistency and external competitiveness.

(c) If the 203 (see Attachment E-1) is on file in the Personnel Department, a job offer is extended to the candidate by the Personnel Department within three (3) days of receiving the Selection Request or Referral Form. The candidate's availability may hinder this deadline. Also, the job offer is contingent upon the successful completion of the employment physical and fingerprinting, where required.

(d) Upon acceptance of the job offer, a processing date is established. Depending upon the availability of the candidate, processing is accomplished within three (3) working days of the acceptance of the job offer.

(e) The employing department is then notified by the Personnel Department to submit the form PD-201 (see Attachment F) with all pertinent information to the Personnel Department within two (2) working days, following the selection of the applicant.

## (3) Certification of Appointment

(a) The Personnel Department within one (1) working day from receipt of the appropriate personnel hiring document, (Form PE)-201), certifies that the appointment has been accomplished in conformity with Charter, ordinances, and applicable Civil Service Rules and Regulations. The Director of Personnel establishes the effective date, forwards all appropriate documents to the Mayor (or designee) for final approval and notifies the Employing Department of the completion of the action.

(b) If the Personnel Department is unable to certify that the appointment meets all legal requirements, the Employing Department is notified within one (1) working day by Personnel in writing of any reason why the documents cannot be certified.

(c) Within one (1) working day after receipt of the aforementioned documents from the Personnel Department, the Mayor (or designee) approves and forwards the personnel action to the Controller for audit, or notifies the Personnel Department and the Employing Department of any reason why such approval

cannot be granted.

(d) Under no circumstances shall any new employee begin work prior to the Mayor's (or designee) approval and forwarding to the Controller for audit.

#### (4) Audit of Transaction

(a) The Controller within three (3) working days of receipt of the documentation, completes the audit of the payroll transaction and forwards the approved documents to the Finance and Administration Department for Central Payroll processing.

(b) Should the Controller's review result in an audit exception, the Controller will notify the Mayor (or designee) in writing (with a copy to the Personnel Department) within one (1) working day enumerating the exception that will prevent processing. The PD-201 will be returned to whoever authorized the final action, in this case the Mayor (or designee), so that the exception can be addressed and the PD-201 corrected, if necessary. If the audit exception is resolved, the original, corrected paperwork will then be returned to the Controller for final audit.

#### (5) Payroll Process

(a) Central Payroll shall process and batch the data relating to the payroll transaction within three (3) working days from its receipt.

(b) The data shall be entered into the payroll master file at the next payroll cycle run.

#### (6) Payroll Warrants

(a) Within three (3) working days from receipt of the unsigned payroll warrants from Central Payroll, the Controller's office will forward a copy of the unsigned warrant to the Mayor with a statement as to why the warrant cannot be signed or delivered. The Controller will also inform the Employing Department directly if a warrant cannot be signed and delivered, so that the affected employee can be informed as soon as possible.

(b) Copies shall be sent by the Controller to the Mayor (or designee) and a written statement explaining in detail why if the warrant cannot be delivered in three (3) working days. This statement should include any legal objections to the delivery of the warrants.

#### c. Other Personnel Actions

Other payroll transactions requiring modification to the Payroll Data Base shall be processed routinely, as close to the effective date of the personnel action as practical, following the same routing as prescribed in Section 7.B above for New Hires.

#### (1) Terminations

(a) The employee is responsible for properly notifying his/her

supervisor in writing of his/her intention to terminate his/her employment with the City and of the date of that termination.

(b) In the case of involuntary termination (firing or death) refer to personnel policy on processing termination due to death. In the case of firing an Employing Department determines the effective date and initiates the personnel action form (PD-201) designating the basic personal and employment data of the employee. At a minimum, such data must include:

- i. date of termination;
- ii. date of last pay;
- iii. date last worked;
- iv. type of pay activity if last day worked is different than last day paid.
- v. salary and longevity;
- vi. date of last salary change and corresponding salary;
- vii. vacation accrual to be paid;
- viii. frozen sick pay balance to be paid;
- ix. current sick pay balance to be paid if in the modified sick plan;
- x. properly signed by the department head or his/her officially recognized designee; and
- xi. if available, attach a copy of the original resignation document; and
- xii. if any balances are owed to the city they must be deducted from the leave balance; and
- xiii. Payments owed for equipment not returned.

(c) In completing the Personnel Action Form, the Employing Department will record the sick/vacation balances as determined from review of the most recent Attendance and Leave Report on the employee and will phone the appropriate Leave Accounting Section of the Personnel Department for verification. The verified balances are recorded on the Personnel Action Form as shown above see Section c. (b) vi-vii).

(d) The personnel action form is then forwarded to the Personnel Department for review. The Personnel Department reviews the form for compliance with appropriate Civil Service and personnel policies and procedures. The Personnel Department verifies the leave balances; signs and attaches the appropriate documentation for to the personnel action form; and sends all such documents to the Controller's office for audit before being forwarded to Central Payroll. A copy of the completed Personnel Action form is then forwarded to the Employing Departments.

(e) Hereafter, all Personnel Action are the same as those enumerated above for new hires (Section 7.b.).

## (2) Promotions, Demotions, Reclassifications

The procedures for processing personnel actions pertaining to promotions, demotions or reclassifications are similar to those for new hires/rehires. In the case of such actions, the selection request form, or the Referral form (refer to Glossary of Forms) with supporting documentation, is completed by the Employing Department.

#### d. Payroll Warrants

##### (1) Creation of Warrant

(a) Within three (3) days of receipt, Central Payroll processes all regular payroll system transactions and causes such transactions to be entered into the payroll master file at the payroll cycle when the file is being updated. Manually processed payroll transactions and payroll checks must be treated as exceptions to regular processing procedures due to their unique characteristics which causes them to be handled manually.

(b) Within two (2) working days before the initial distribution of the payroll warrants, Central Payroll edits all payroll transactions for the appropriate cycle, and authorizes that the payroll warrants be printed by the appropriate unit of General Services Department. Central Payroll will process and up-date the master file, the Employing Departments will submit other payroll transactions to Central Payroll; and the Central Payroll Division will run payroll. No matter what type of PD-201 is being considered, it will be audited by the Controller; and the Controller will sign and release the checks or notify the Employing Department and Central Payroll and the Mayor, if necessary, of any exceptions.

##### (2) Certification and Distribution

(a) On the same day the warrants are printed, all other reports; e. g. master activity, payroll register, pension report, deduction register, etc. are printed. These reports are forwarded to the Personnel Department, City Controller and Employing Department within one (1) day of printing.

(b) The Personnel Department receives the master activity report, automated payroll and manual check registers, year-to-date earning report, and pension report.

(c) Upon receipt of certification by the Personnel Department and within three (3) days of receipt of the unsigned payroll warrants including all relevant payroll reports, from Central Payroll, the Controller's office affixes the appropriate signature to the warrant and makes them available to the Employing Department. If for any reason the warrants cannot be made available to the Employing Departments within three (3) days, the Controller must provide to Central Payroll a written statement including any legal objections as to why the warrant cannot be delivered.